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ABSTRACT

Written for individuals and/or groups, this manual provides a step-by-step guide to the implementation of day care during special events such as fund raisers and workshops. The introduction includes information on staff, site, and insurance requirements. Next, instruction is provided on the preparation of business forms, meeting the unique needs of children, discipline, scheduling, activities, equipment, food, and emergency and security precautions. Special care for each age group is described; and evaluations, saying goodbye to children, and final clean-up are discussed. Sample forms are included. (BJD)

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The Bananas' Manual on Event Child Care

By The Bananas Child Care Information and Referral Collective

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The Bananas' Manual on Event Child Care

by

The Bananas Child Care Information
and Referral Collective

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Introduction

Over the years, BANANAS has planned and provided child care during many of its fund-raisers and workshops. Offering child care certainly makes an event more attractive to parents. But, we have learned from our firsthand experiences that this type of child care is perhaps the most difficult kind of care to do well. Our reputation of offering event child care brings us many requests each year from organizations and individuals who want to do it but who don't really know where to begin. This manual is our attempt to share what we've learned. It is much longer than we originally intended it to be but we kept discovering areas we felt needed to be discussed and suggestions we wanted to include.

Our goal certainly isn't to make event child care look too complicated to try. At the same time, however, we want other groups to know and understand the complications and responsibilities of offering child care at events before making the commitment to do so. Good event child care can be a real plus to a great many events. With tnoughtful and careful planning, it can be a positive experience for all involved -- the organization sponsoring the event, the parents using the care, the workers providing it, and most of all, the children. Nothing makes for better community relations.

So You Want to Offer Event Child Care?

Any organization that decides to offer child care during an event needs to come to that decision after careful consideration of a number of factors. Some events simply don't lend themselves to this type of care. For example, any event involving hundreds of families (especially if it occurs out-of-doors with no child care facility available), is going to be a very difficult event at which to provide good child care. So while offering the care might be a good draw for parents, that in itself isn't enough of a basis for making the decision to do so. You must consider the nature of the event, the availability of good child care space at or near the event (or transportation to and fro), the expense of hiring good staff and possibly renting child care space as well as the time and energy that it will take away from your main fundraiser or workshop. If the activity you are offering is one which could be enjoyed as well by the children as their parents, there doesn't seem to be a point to segregating the children in child care. On the other hand, if you are offering an event that is basically for adults and you would like parents to attend and be able to participate without their children -- then offering child care is a positive solution. We would suggest that your group review this entire manual before deciding to offer child care. We think it's a great thing to do but it isn't worth doing unless you can do it well.

Sponsorship

The organization responsible for the event should also be responsible for sponsoring the child care. This doesn't mean that the sponsors must actually do the care, but it does mean that the organization is dedicated both to the idea of providing child care and to carrying it through to a happy outcome. It also means parents will know (from the beginning) who is responsible for the care and to whom they can give suggestions, criticisms and praise. The sponsoring organization can either hire a coordinator for the child care or develop a core group within the organization to do the care. The sponsor should have a clear concise contract with any outside coordinator and other hired staff. This contract should outline staff and sponsor responsibilities and contain other pertinent information about wages and working conditions. We have included a sample contract in the back of this manual. You can use it as a basis for developing one of your own.

Sponsors should also be responsible for the clear advertising of the care, for making reservations in advance for children and for collecting child care fees if they are to be charged. Offering child care at events is not only a matter of principal -- it also requires a financial commitment. Enough money needs to be budgeted from the beginning to cover staff expenses, supplies, food and other miscellaneous expenditures such as rent. If the organization does not have enough money to cover all the expenses, parents can be charged on an hourly basis, on a flat fee basis (the easiest route) or by donation. Non-parent attendees of the event can also be asked to contribute toward child care expenses. But above all else, it is important to establish a realistic budget for the child care before even attempting to offer it. The responsibility for covering the expenses rests with the sponsors of the event.

Here are some factors to consider when drawing up a child care budget:

- -Coordinator and staff salaries (Be sure to include preparation and clean up time)
- -Site rental (Of course first try to get a free site.)
- -Supplies (Again, first scrounge what you can but some materials will have to be purchased.)
- -Food (Decide if you will be serving a meal; in any case snacks are mandatory.)
- -Paperwork (You will need various forms and information sheets for parents and staff. See samples on pp. 31-47.)
- -Liability Insurance (See insurance section, p. 5.)
- -Incidental Expenses (You need a "kitty" at the event in case you have last minute expenses.)

The length of the event, the number of children in the care, the going rate for child care workers and the availability of a free space to use in providing care will all affect your budget. If your organization has little child care experience, you may want to include your coordinator in the budget planning. In any event, any hired coordinator should have the opportunity to review the budget and make suggestions before the event.

Coordinator

Who you select to be the coordinator can "make or break" your child care. No matter how collective or collaborative the staff is, it is hard (if not impossible) to provide good event child care without a strong coordinator. Given the nature of the event (tem-

porary. short-term, children who don't know each other or the adults, staff who may not have ever worked together before), a coordinator is necessary to pull all the details together and insure continuity. Even if your organization decides not to hire someone from the outside to take this role, one individual should still be appointed to take primary responsibility.

The coordinator should be present throughout the span of care. If the event lasts overnight or is for more than one day, the coordinator's role can be shared or relief times provided; but the parents and staff, as well as the children, need the coordinator to be a central figure and available on call at all times.

A list of the duties and responsibilities of the coordinator would probably include but not be limited to the following:

- -Hiring staff
- -Deciding how many children and what ages are to be served (in consultation with sponsor)
- -Coordinating schedules and staff assignments (with staff participation)
- -Evaluating and/or selecting the site for care
- -Arranging for borrowed and purchased materials
- -Developing and signing contracts for self and staff (with Sponsor)
- -Preparing registration, emergency, medical release, and sign-in/ sign-out forms
- -Preparing a written explanation of the care for parents
- -Making contacts with security personnel and police
- -Being present to greet children and parents
- -Being present and supervising throughout the care (with break times)
- -Being available or designating another staff person to be available for emergencies
- -Supervising clean-up of site and returning any borrowed equipment or materials

Your organization may have other responsibilities to add to this list. If you hire a coordinator, it is a good idea for someone on your staff to go over each responsibility before the event to discuss what the coordinator had planned. If there are decisions that you do not want the coordinator to be responsible for, these should be clear from the beginning. This is also true if there are specific activities you do not want to be a part of the child care (i.e. T.V. watching, eating junk food, etc.).

So how do you find a coordinator if your organization decides to hire one? Child care information and referral agencies (like BANANAS), child care centers, recreational programs and schools are good places to look for people who have had experience in event or group child care. The coordinator should ideally have experience not just with child care, but also with organizational and administrative work. If you plan in advance, you can advertise in your community for a coordinator. As with hiring any other kind of worker, a good interviewing process will help you make a good selection. It is important to find out the applicant's past experience working with event or group child care, past experience supervising other child care workers and general philosophy about children and child caring. You will probably want to ask some hypothetical questions such as *"What would you do if a child got injured while in care?" "How would you handle disagreements between staff?" "What would you do about a child who refused to participate in planned activities?"*. These kinds of questions will give you a clearer picture of the candidate's potential for the job.

Sponsors should also ask for references when hiring a coordinator and you should follow through by contacting them. Remember that the coordinator in the eyes of the public represents your organization. It is important to hire someone that the sponsoring group has confidence in and who will offer the kind of child care that you will be proud of. Sponsors and hired coordinators should ALWAYS have a written agreement or contract signed before the coordinator is actually hired. Having responsibilities in writing gives you something to refer back to -- especially useful should any disagreements arise later.

Site

Physical space plays an important part in determining how children will react during care and how well the staff will be able to provide comfortable, safe, enjoyable care. Start the site search early. Both the coordinator and the event sponsor can be involved in this -- or the sponsor can delegate the search to the coordinator. Space should be near (if not at) the place where the event occurs. If space isn't readily available, begin looking for space to borrow or rent in churches, schools, child care centers, recreational centers, gyms, even people's homes. Be sure that the owners of the space have liability insurance (more on insurance, later). It is a good idea for the propriator and the sponsor of the event to have a written agreement about insurance, clean up, deposits or coverage for breakage and the use of any equipment in the space.

Both the amount of space and the safety features of the space should be checked out carefully. ESTIMATE CLOSELY how many children can be accommodated (a general rule of thumb is to have at least 35 square feet of indoor space per child). Once you determine the number of children who can be safely accommodated, no more than that amount should be allowed in the space at one time. Also analyze the space to determine what ages of children should be in care, i.e. a space without infant equipment (cribs, changing tables, etc.) should not be used for infants unless the sponsor or coordinator can borrow proper infant equipment. If you restrict the care to only children of a certain age, stick to that decision. Even space normally used for the care of children should have a safety check. Some hazards to look for are:

-Open stairs (these should be blocked or gated off)
-Child level protrusions from walls or furniture
-No access to bathrooms or drinking water
-Unsafe windows which can be easily opened by children
-Too much open space -- especially for little children
-Exposed heating vents
-Exposed electrical outlets (easily capped off with covers from a hardware store)
-No or unsafe access to the outside (space should have at least two exits)
-Poor lighting
-Doors which can be easily opened by children
-Open access to kitchen facilities

Many of these hazards can be corrected before the care, but if there are serious, uncorrectable problems, you should continue your search for good space.

Ideally, event child care should take place in more than one room -- children need large muscle activity space as well as room for quiet activities. Also, if there will be a nap time, there should be some separation of sleeping children from the ones who do not sleep. If the child care will be of mixed age groups infants and toddlers need the opportunity to be away from the older children at least some of the time. If the space is one big room or area with no dividers, there are techniques to create smaller areas:

- -Big pillows, portable play structures, tables, chairs and other furniture can be used to delineate sections.
- -Blankets strung over a table can turn into a dramatic play area or a rest space (with adult supervision, of course!).
- -Moveable chalk boards and masking tape on floors can help define areas.

For daytime child care there should be some outside space, especially for older children. Outside space must be checked out carefully for some of the same hazards listed above, e.g. protrusions at child level, open stairs, etc. but add the necessity for a high fence with lockable gate or other barriers to street access. A simple roping off of outdoor space doesn't work; it symbolizes limits for adults and some older children but means nothing except a place to climb to young children.

Some groups have tried using only outdoor space for event child care. This is very tricky and should only be used as a last resort. At the least, the space would have to be fenced or barricaded off and both shady and sunny areas available. Easy access to running water and bathrooms is also a must. Back up plans would have to be made for unexpected bad weather.

Insurance

The sponsor's own liability insurance may cover the child care (always confirm this with your insurance agent). If not, a special policy can be easily purchased to cover both the event and the care (approximate cost: $50-$100). Make sure any insurance covers all involved -- the children, parents, staff and any visitors. The owners of the space should also have liability insurance but will probably want to see proof of additional insurance from the sponsor. Protect yourself by talking to a reliable agent and making sure your event and your child care have adequate insurance coverage.

Reservations for Care

If at all possible, parents should be asked to reserve IN ADVANCE for child care. This will solve more problems than are imaginable. The reservations can be made part of the

registration form for such events as conferences & workshops. Otherwise, the need to make child care reservations should be clearly stated in any advertising of an event where pre-registration is not required. If parents reserve space far enough in advance, staff can be hired proportionately and better preparation made. We strongly advise using this approach.

If child care fees are to be charged, it is easier to collect them in advance as part of the reservation process. Parents phoning in reservations for care can be told that they have a temporary reservation pending the receipt of payment for the child care. They can also be given a date a few days before the event by which their payment must be received. Collecting any fees beforehand saves staff time and the necessity of making change, etc. on the day of the event.

If more parents call in to reserve care than can be accommodated, then you can put late callers on a waiting list to be contacted if other parents cancel out. In any case, you should make sure all parents calling in to reserve care give you their names and phone numbers (home & work) where they can be contacted if necessary. You will also need to find out how many children they are making reservations for, the ages of the children and if there are any special health conditions. If you use an advance reservation system, children who show up the day of the event without reservations should only be admitted to the child care if you have the staff and space to safely care for them. Otherwise, they should be politely turned away. If your advertisements for the event have clearly stated the need for prior reservations, you will be able to point this out to disgruntled parents and hopefully alleviate any hard feelings (you can also put them on a waiting list, see below).

When advance reservations are not possible, the numbers and ages of the children who can be safely cared for should be determined ahead of time by the staff. The fact that the child care is on a first come, first served basis should be a clear part of any advertising of the event. Also clearly state the ages of the children that can be accommodated. That way parents will not come absolutely expecting care for their children. No more children than the staff has determined can be cared for should be admitted at any one time. Nor, should children younger or older than the care is planned for be admitted. Parents need to have this explained clearly and they need to understand the reasons for limiting care -- it is not to make the work easier, but it is to assure the safety, health and well-being of the children, staff and parents. If you decide to offer care without advance reservations, you may want to print up an explanation of the limits of care to have available for parents whose children can't be accommodated (in addition to your regular parent information sheet).

There is nothing more detrimental to event child care (and children) than too many children in too small a space with too few staff. That kind of situation discourages parents from using event child care in the future -- not to mention discouraging children from wanting to participate in event child care! If more children need care than can safely be admitted, the coordinator can establish a waiting list and admit new children from it as other children leave throughout the day. If a public address system isn't available, then parents with children on the waiting list should be told to check back with the child care coordinator either periodically or at a specific time/s. Sponsors and staff can also choose to limit the time each child can spend in child care, e.g. each family can have care for one session or one afternoon, etc. This would allow more parents to use care part of the time and still keep the child care from being overcrowded.

Staff

Selecting, preparing and supervising the staff is perhaps the most important role of the coordinator. Experience (with different age groups of children and with different types of children such as those with special needs) is important to consider. It is also good to maintain a sexual and racial balance of staff and to hire people with different skills such as music, theater arts, sports, etc. An over-all ratio of AT LEAST ONE ADULT TO EVERY FIVE CHILDREN is usually necessary. However, if infants are being cared for the recommended ratio for that group (the under 2-year olds) would be ONE ADULT FOR EVERY THREE INFANTS. Experienced child care workers can be recruited through child care information and referral agencies, child care centers, recreation programs, schools, etc.

Working Conditions, Staff Pay, Back-up Workers

Child care workers must always be compensated and valued for their work. Before hiring anyone, the sponsor should find out what the "going rate" is for group care of children in the area. If the organization cannot pay that amount but still wants to offer child care, some other arrangement will have to be worked out before any workers are hired. The group can decide to charge parents for all or part of the costs or workers may be willing to accept concert tickets, a book that is part of the conference or some other "barter" item. The written contract should include staff salary level and state the type of payment (cash, check or other compensation)and when payment will be made (at the event, mailed later, etc.).

Work hours and breaks need to be clearly understood by both the sponsor and the staff. Working with children requires an intensive concentration and much physical energy. No one should be asked to work more than four hours without a break and some circumstances will require more frequent breaks due to the age of the children, size of group or demands of the care. Lunch or dinner breaks for staff is a negotiable item but should always be included as paid time if the work shift is five hours or more.

The sponsor and staff need to discuss at the time of hiring what will happen if not enough children show up to warrant the amount of staff hired. Some workers may be willing to settle for an hour's wages or free admittance to the event if they are not needed. All those arrangements as well as the work hours and breaks agreed upon should also be part of the written contract.

Once workers are hired, they should know how to contact the coordinator or sponsor should an emergency prevent them from working the day of the event. It is always a good idea to have a few extra workers in mind who agree to be on call the day of the event in case of staff not showing up, staff illness or the need to add more children to the care (space permitting, of course). These people can either be asked to show up at the beginning of the event or be where they can be reached by phone at a specific time. Back-up workers may also be willing to accept a token payment or free pass to the event if not needed. In lieu of paid back-up workers, the sponsor can designate several of its own employees to assist with the child care if necessary. In a pinch, workers can be solicited from the audience of an event but this approach is not reliable and not recommended except in an emergency.

Advance registration of the children and the promptness and responsibility of the staff can reduce the panic about back-up workers (if not the need). Advance registration insures that enough workers were hired in the first place. However, emergencies do arise. Staff can be asked to find their own substitutes if they know in advance they won't be able to work or the coordinator may prefer to arrange for back-up workers. For long term care (four hours or more) "relief workers" are a must. Again, these can be members of the sponsoring organization or volunteers but it is usually preferable to have prepared experienced people ready to provide that relief. The program, children and staff all will benefit from this kind of advance preparation.

Volunteers

Volunteers are great and much appreciated by event child care sponsors and staff. But, because it takes so much preparation, planning and cooperative implementation to run good event child care, volunteers can't be relied upon to do the whole job. The only time a totally volunteer staff should be used is when an experienced group of child care workers will donate their services (time and energy) to the organization sponsoring the event.

Volunteers can be used to supplement the core paid staff and to give relief time. During transition times they are invaluable as aides to work with clean-up, preparation, etc. People with special skills or interests (the friend who raises snakes) are often a welcome addition to the schedule. Adult event participants are sometimes willing to come to the care during their break or free time to entertain the children (they should, of course, be invited to do so in advance).

Whenever volunteers are to be used, they should be given a short orientation concerning the schedule and rules of the child care and given specific tasks to do with the children. They need to understand the importance of a planned program and how it supports security for the children as well as the staff. They should also understand that the coordinator of the child care is in charge and is the person any questions should be taken to.

Thank you's are in order from the staff and sponsors whenever volunteers participate no matter how small the contribution of time. Some good places to find volunteers include:

- -The audience or performers at an event
- -Local volunteer bureaus and service organizations
- -Friends and supporters of the sponsoring organization
- -Youth groups like Explorer Scouts

Incorporating the Event into the Child Care

It is not only fun for children to be involved in the event which their parents are attending -- but it is also reassuring and comforting for them to know something about what their parents are doing while they are in child care. There are several ways to integrate the theme of the event into the child care program. Depending on the age of the children, discussions can take place during group time and at snack time about the political event, conference, etc. Children can be

encouraged to draw pictures, write or dictate stories, or tape record their thoughts about the event and its purpose. If the event is a concert or other performance, the artists could be asked to come and visit the child care and, if they have the time and energy, to entertain the children. If practical (and welcomed by the sponsor) small groups of children could be taken to the event for short periods. For school-age children, the involvement could be more sophisticated, such as the creation of a "youth caucus" or "youth contingent" which holds its own event parallel to the adult event. All of these kinds of activities should be cleared with the sponsors first and their cooperation assured. Such activities promote the idea that children can share in their parents' interests and activities. Needless to say, good staff planning is necessary for this kind of intergration to be successful.

Planning Together, Working Together

It can be difficult to work together if the staff has never met each other let alone taken care of children together. The coordinator and staff should meet in advance of the event and get to know one another while jointly planning the schedule, activities and staff assignments (unless agreed otherwise this should be paid time). Even though most events only last a day or an evening or two, it is important for staff to have some idea of each other's philosophies regarding children (discipline, nurturing styles, etc.) and each other's professional backgrounds. A good technique for staff introductions is to go around the room and have the workers describe what their child care experience has been, what they enjoy doing with children and what they would like to see happen during this particular child care. People should also feel free to talk about what they don't like to do or see happen in child care situations.

Planning in advance is an important key element even though spontaniety and flexibility are needed in good event child care, experience has shown that it's better to be <u>over</u> prepared than <u>under</u> prepared. The following sections take a look at each important aspect of the care -- with suggestions for pre-planning and ideas to use while doing the care.

Preparation of Forms

Registration and emergency forms as well as an explanation of the care for parents all need to be prepared in advance. These can be written by the coordinator but should be reviewed by the entire staff. The importance of complete, easy to read forms cannot be stressed enough. For one thing, the forms will give the staff the information needed to do a good job, e.g. whether or not children have any allergies or special medical conditions. In addition, without properly signed emergency forms, hospitals or emergency rooms may not examine children without a parent present. Name tags should also be prepared in advance for the staff and available the day of care for the children. (Pin or staple tags on the back of active toddlers' clothing to prevent loss.) It is a good idea to put any important information about a child right on her name tag, e.g. "Susan is allergic to milk." Even though specific staff should be assigned to greet and

register parents and children as they arrive, all staff should understand the process and the forms being used.

Meeting the Unique Needs of Children in Care

It is useful to talk about how different age groups relate to event care and how different children react to new people taking care of them. For example, younger, less experienced children will need more support in separating from their parents. Older children on the other hand, may have become "jaded" or bored with group care. In addition, event child care often takes place at night, on a week-end or some time when children may be tired, have already been with groups of people that day or just plain don't want to be away from their parents. Ways to handle resistance of the children to the care and how to encourage children to enjoy the program should be agreed upon. Must children join all activities? Should they be left alone if they want to be? Should a certain staff member be assigned to the more "recalcitrant" while the rest of the staff provides activities for the more interested children?

Separation and Transition Times

Often the hardest time in event child care is when the children first arrive and are left by their parents. Both parents' and children's needs should be considered. One suggestion for handling this difficult period is to make sure that there are already attractive projects set up for the children and staff assigned to each project or area. Having a well planned registration process also helps. Specific staff should be responsible for greeting parents and children and for making sure that parents sign in, fill out forms, complete the child's name tag and label belongings. (Ask parents for the correct pronunciation of any difficult names.) This intake staff should also explain the program to the parent and answer any questions. Parents should be encouraged to look around the space with the child, meet the staff, try to interest the child in an activity, tell the child when s/he will be picked up and say good-bye. The staff needs to be especially understanding and reassuring at this time to help ease separation anxieties. BE SURE THERE IS A WRITTEN EXPLANATION OF THE CARE INCLUDING THE CLOSING TIME OF THE CHILD CARE FOR ALL PARENTS TO TAKE WITH THEM.

Enough staff to cover the registration process, supervise projects and talk to parents and children is a must for this time in order to create a good beginning. But, sometimes no matter how hard staff and parents try, there will be a crying or otherwise reluctant child who is left. A staff member should be on hand to work one-to-one for awhile and comfort the child while trying to interest him in an activity. Keeping anxieties to a minimum is important because they are extremely contagious! Parents should leave feeling that there are caring concerned people who will help an unhappy child get involved in the care. On the other hand, many children will dry their tears and join in the fun as soon as their parents are out of sight. So, except in extreme cases (e.g. a truly hysterical child), parents should be encouraged to say good-bye and be reassured that they will be contacted if the child doesn't adjust to the care. A face-to-face good-bye is important however. The staff should discourage parents from "slipping out" without saying good-bye to their children.

Other important transition periods involve those times when the children are getting ready to eat or go to bed or times when children are being separated into small groups. It is helpful to have specific assignments for each staff member when moving the children from one activity to another. A good example is snack time. Each staff member should clean up and put away the activity s/he is supervising (with the children's help). Some staff members should then gather the children into a group, some staff should prepare the snack while other staff members can be assigned to clean-up the snack area afterwards. The staff who will be supervising the children should be aware that it is hard to involve children as a group when they don't know each other or the adults caring for them. Special activities such as songs which include the children's names, easy fingerplays or a good short story can help get everyone interested and attentive. Washing up before a snack or meal can be chaotic unless there is enough staff to efficiently and pleasantly help the children through the washing process. When the children are gathered into the large group and interested in the song, story, etc., some staff members can take a small group away from the group as a whole to wash up (how small a group would depend on the available number of wash basins) while other staff continued to keep the large group entertained. This process would be repeated until the entire group had washed their hands and faces. Thinking through the different steps of specific transition periods and making staff assignments beforehand should help insure that they go smoothly.

Discipline

Always a crucial matter in child care, discipline is something that should be thoroughly discussed. Agreement concerning the methods to be used should be reached by the entire staff. A lot of patience may have to be exercised with tired, upset children in event care. Consistency is the key to discipline and to the children's enjoyment of the child care. Such questions as how to handle disruptive children, how to enforce limits (isolation, scolding, etc.), what to do with hitters and biters, and whether or not parents will be asked to take children out of care if they are extremely disruptive -- are all issues the staff needs to talk about and agree on BEFORE the care takes place.

It is easier to establish and maintain control if there are as few rules as possible and they are always enforced. Too many rules and regulations are difficult to follow and make it harder for staff to be consistent. Other adults (volunteers, visitors) should be told what the rules are and asked to help maintain them. Most importantly, the children need to know what is expected of them and what the consequences are if they misbehave. There could be a group time early in the child care period when the children discuss what can and cannot happen during the care. Older children can even participate in setting the limits. A staff member should lead the discussion and the other staff members should also be present. This can be handled in a pleasant manner and the discussion can also include a description of the activities planned for the day. It could also be a time to answer any questions the children might have. Such a discussion should take place after all or almost all the children have been registered.

Posting written rules will help both older children and adults remember them. Younger pre-schoolers can be shown the written rules and have them read to them. Pre-readers love to see the written word and be included in its magic!

Scheduling

A tight, well-planned schedule provides security for all involved. Even though the best laid plans may go awry, the organizing of those plans will help the staff get a sense of the day (or evening), what is expected and how best each staff member can work to meet the needs of the children. Variety is important -- quiet activities, noisy ones, indoor activities, walks, etc. should all be included in order to prevent restlessness and boredom among the children. Some unstructured free play time as well as structured periods like snack, story time and group time should be part of the program. Age groups should be taken into consideration -- younger children's schedules may differ from older children's. Infants will certainly need a different schedule from the 10-year olds. (More on special age groups later.)

One way to plan a schedule is to list all the "musts" (activities which must occur like registration of the children, meal time, clean up, etc.) and "choices" (other activities which the staff would like to do with the children). Then, make an outline of the day by time blocks and fit everything into an appropriate time space. Transition times, especially those which may produce chaos or upsets should be scheduled with care. Each staff member should know exactly what is going to take place throughout the day. Cooperation is of the utmost importance in carrying out a schedule. Just as in keeping discipline consistent, a staff should be able to depend on each other to assist in implementing the planned schedule.

To help parents understand what their children will be doing in child care and to remind the staff of the planned activities, the schedule can be neatly printed on a large piece of paper and posted for all to see. Staff names can be written next to the activities they are responsible for.

Activities

The projects and activities that the staff designs for the event depend on the ages of the children, the size of the group, the facilities being used and if it is day time or evening child care. It is always easier to plan if the staff knows how many children will be attending the care and how old they are. Not knowing this information means that supplies will have to be purchased to implement projects for whomever shows up. It also requires more flexibility on the part of the staff and the gathering of more diverse equipment. All this uncertainty can be eliminated by taking reservations in advance for the child care. But, if that is not possible, don't despair. There are activities which can be adjusted to different age groups. Many music, art, dramatic play, crafts and some cooking projects can be scaled "up" or "down" depending on the ages of the children. An example of this would be the use of play dough. If most of

the children are very young it can be used for manipulation(pounding, punching, rolling, etc.) and making simple shapes. If, however, the majority of children turn out to be school age the play dough can be used to construct scenes (towns, the moon, etc.) which can be set aside to dry and take home.

Staff should try to keep activities interesting but simple. Since the child care is for a short time and on a one-time-only basis, complicated science or nature study projects may not be appropriate. However, simple science experiments which can be completed in a given time and short "nature walks" are good activities. Special consideration should be given to evening care. A balance of stimulating and calming activities needs to be maintained depending on the fatigue level of the children. (Unfortunately the staff will not know for sure what that fatigue level is until the child care occurs, so flexibility and staff cooperation is of the utmost importance in the evening.)

Adults working with children should always guard against projects that will try their own patience if everything doesn't work out perfectly. Activities which frustrate the staff will also frustrate the children. This is especially true for "messy" projects like making play dough or cooking. When planning for these projects, staff should ask:

- -Is water for clean up easily accessible?
- -Can this project be cleaned up quickly and without too much trouble?
- -Is there space for children to really enjoy this?
- -Do I really want to do it?

There are many good books full of projects and activities to do with children. Book stores and libraries will be helpful in suggesting some. The coordinator and staff will probably have good resources and ideas of their own. Some activities which can be useful with pre-schoolers and most school age children are:

- -Play dough (made with the children or in advance)
- -Collage making & other gluing projects
- -Dramatic play or dress up
- -Records
- -Books
- -Bubble making (outdoors)
- -Clay
- -Table games
- -Movies or slides
- -Child made books
- -Nature studies
- -Dictation & illustration of stories
- -Making and listening to tape recordings
- -Cooking projects
- -Sports & outdoor games
- -Walks such as a garbage walk
- -Tempera/finger painting
- -Carpentry
- -Sewing
- -Rhythm bands & making musical instruments i.e. drums from oatmeal cartons
- -Guessing games like "I spy"
- -Simple science projects
- -Puppet shows & making puppets
- -Rubber stamp art
- -Singing

Equipment and Materials

There are two kinds of materials that have to be gathered for event child care: those supplies needed for the general running of the program and those for the specific projects planned. Gathering, transporting and returning equipment can be the sole responsibility of the coordinator or it can be shared by the whole staff. One way to share the work is to have each staff member responsible for the supplies for a specific project and the coordinator responsible for the general supplies and any extras, such as a movie projector and library books. However this is handled, each staff person must know what the responsibilities are about borrowing, renting and returning equipment. The borrowed equipment should always be treated with great care and returned in good condition as promptly as possible. Labeling borrowed items with the owner's name will aid in their return. Consummable supplies which can't be scrounged (such as paper plates, crayons, etc.) should be paid for by the sponsor. The actual purchasing of these supplies can be delegated to the staff once activities are planned. Supply money should be included in the child care budget and the staff should know how much money is available for this purpose.

One good way to keep costs down and recycle resources is to scrounge as many supplies as possible from stores, recycling organizations, offices, factories, etc. Paper is usually attainable from newspaper plants, art stores, computer companies, etc. Donations can be solicited from businesses in the area (materials & or dollars) especially if the child care is part of a benefit or other event for a "good cause". Some possible places which can be contacted to borrow equipment are:

- -Toy lending libraries (many information and referral agencies have them.)
- -Public libraries
- -Schools
- -Child care centers
- -Recreation programs
- -Churches
- -Friends

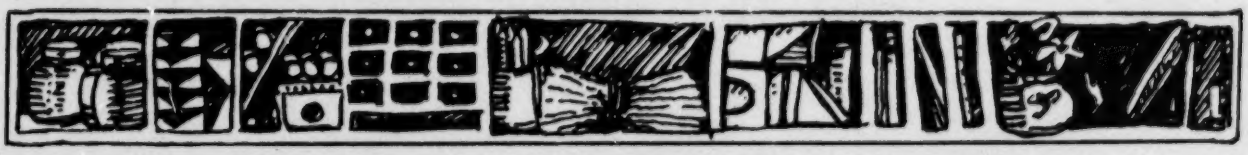
The following is a suggested list of supplies:

GENERAL EQUIPMENT (You will probably need all of these.)

- -First aid kit & first aid book
- -Disposable diapers (parents should also be asked to supply these)
- -Masking, scotch & adhesive tape
- -Name tags
- -Pens & pencils for registration
- -Utensils for food preparation
- -Lamps if lighting is poor
- -Paper plates, cups & disposable silverware
- -Child size tables & chairs
- -Portable gates for stairs & doorways
- -Handi-wipes & paper towels
- -Safety pins of assorted sizes
- -Adult scissors
- -Tissue & toilet paper
- -Pillows, blankets, cots or mats
- -Ice chest (if no refrigeration)
- -Sponges & rags for clean up
- -Newspaper
- -Mop, broom, dustpan, vacuum cleaner
- -Soap & disinfectant
- -Water containers (buckets or dish pans) --especially if water source isn't close by
- -Electrical outlet covers
- -Emergency kitty including dimes for pay phone if needed
- -Potty chairs if toddlers are in care
- -Rocking chair (for rocking babies)

ACTIVITY EQUIPMENT (Any of these will be useful.)

- -Infant toys (mirrors, fabric books nesting cups, etc.)
- -Puzzles
- -Record player & records
- -Trucks, cars trains
- -Lego & other manipulative toys
- -Crayons & magic markers (lots!)
- -Hole punches & children's scissors
- -Paste and/or glue
- -Puppets & puppet stage
- -Paper of a variety of colors & sizes
- -String for macrame & other crafts
- -Dress-up clothes & accessories
- -Dolls & stuffed animals (pre-cleaned)
- -Large muscle equipment (portable climbing structures, mats or pillows for tumbling)
- -Jump ropes
- -Balls
- -Beads or noodles & string or shoe laces
- -Table games (of varying levels)
- -Chalk & chalk boards
- -Blocks (table & floor blocks)
- -Books
- -Wood scraps for construction & sculptures
- -Rubber stamps & pads
- -Paint brushes & containers (for use outdoors with water even if painting is not included)



MEDIA EQUIPMENT (Decide which you want and arrange to borrow beforehand.)

- -Radio or T.V. (Limit use.)
- -Record player & records
- -Movie projector & movies (Some libraries lend these.)
- -Tape recorder and tapes (both pre-recorded for listening and blank tape for recording the children)
- -Slide or film strip projector & films to show
- -Screen or sheet if needed for movies, etc.

MATERIALS FOR SPECIAL PROJECTS (Select your projects and then gather the needed materials.)

Once the staff has decided what special projects will be included, then materials need to be gathered for each one. For example, if painting is going to take place, you will need the paints, brushes, paint containers, paint smocks (old shirts work well) paper, and easels or a table to paint on. Bubble making means you need the soap and containers to mix it in as well as the wands for actually making the bubbles. Any cooking project will necessitate having on hand the ingredients, mixing bowls, utensils, pans & and stove if the "finished" product needs to be cooked. Don't forget any items you may need to make cleaning up the special project easier, e.g. vaseline applied under face paint simplifies its removal. Different staff can be asked to gather all the materials needed for the specific special project they will supervise during the care.

If you are using a site which normally serves children, toys and equipment may be readily available and yours to use as part of the rental agreement. However, no consumable supplies (paints, paper, crayons, etc.) should be used without specific permission. Items which the owners of the space don't want used should be removed from sight before the care begins.

The Prevention of the Lost Teddy Bear

One of the biggest "housekeeping" jobs involved in any child care is keeping track of precious objects like clothes, baby bottles, pacifiers, dolls and teddy bears. Label everything as the child is registered. Children, clothes, (jackets and sweaters, especially), toys which belong to children, diaper bags and any unattached objects should have names on them at all times. (Adhesive tape and magic markers will aid in this task.) Each child should have a "cubby" in which to put his/her things. Cubbies can be paper bags, cardboard boxes, milk crates or any other creative receptacle. A cubby should be assigned to each child at registration and both the child and the parents should know where the cubby is and what can be kept in it. "Ownership" of the cubby should be respected by all the children. A clear understanding about responsibility for the children's belongings should be established between the staff and parents. The staff may want to limit the items a child can bring to child care -- like no small toys or only one toy per child. As in any child care situation, parents should be encouraged to dress their children for active play. That special sweater from grandmother may not be the best thing to wear when there is danger of it getting lost in the course of a child care day.

Food

Food for the body is often food for the soul. Children not only need a snack (in some cases, a meal) at event child care -- but they also enjoy it. Serving food can provide benefits to the program beyond nutrition. It can create a format for group time, for sharing and for comforting and calming children. Depending on the group size the children can eat in one large group or in smaller groups. Sitting while eating should be a basic rule. It is not only unsafe for children to have food while they are playing but it can also make for chaos and a lot of mess. There should be one staff member (or more) with each group of children during a meal. This time can be used for getting to know each other, to talk about the event the parents are attending and to tell stories.

Only healthy, nutritious foods should be served with as little sugar or perservatives as possible. Foods to be avoided are those which are salty, sticky or hard to digest. Liquid intake should be monitored -- especially near nap or bed time. If infants are part of the group, there should be appropriate food for them, and they should be watched to see that they aren't fed something inappropriate by a "big kid" helper.

The sponsor of the event should be responsible for paying for the food and can either delegate its purchase to the staff or provide it. In any case, the staff should have some say as to the menu. This is especially true if the children are to be served the same type food as their parents will be eating at an event. Some adult type dinners may need to be modified to make them more suitable. When doing menu planning be sure to include enough food for the adult staff.

Here are some suggestions of healthy food children usually like:

-Pasta
-Fruit and fruit juices
-Crackers of all types -- especially graham crackers
-Cheese & cream cheese
-Peanut butter & jelly sandwiches or peanut butter and anything!
-Nuts and seeds
-Eggs cooked any number of ways
-Tuna fish
-Cereal hot or cold
-Milk
-Some vegetables like corn, carrots, green beans are favorites
-Popcorn makes a good snack
-Cookies low in sugar content
-Carrot & celery sticks

Note: Infants and toddlers should not be given popcorn, nuts, uncooked carrots or other such hard to chew and swallow food. Plan on monitoring "little ones" if such items are on the menu.

Food preparation utensils, paper plates, cups, plastic eating utensils and storage containers need to be included in the equipment and food planning. Refrigeration is important -- if no refrigerator is available at the site, ice chests can be used. Access to a stove isn't essential but it can make for more interesting menus. The kitchen or cooking area should be away from the main child care space.

If time, staff and planning are adequate, children can be involved in preparing some of the food -- or they can create a cooking project which can be eaten by all -- like pizzas on English muffins or sandwiches with faces! One or more staff members should be responsible for cleaning up after snack or meal time -- try to have the children involved in clean up as well. Even very young children can "bus" their dishes to the trash cans or clean-up area.

Children with complex dietary needs should have their food brought by the parents. Those children sometimes need extra attention (i.e. seeing that they don't eat food which they shouldn't, etc.) and should not be made to feel "strange" or "different" because they cannot eat what everyone else does. Other children can be helped to understand that we all have different needs and those needs have to be respected.

Emergency and Security Precautions

Because event child care often takes place at night or in a separate building/site from where parents are, it is a real concern of staff and sponsors to maintain adequate security and emergency measures. A few considerations:

-NEVER ALLOW A CHILD INTO CHILD CARE UNLESS THE PARENT HAS FILLED OUT THE REGISTRATION, MEDICAL CONSENT AND EMERGENCY FORMS.

-Make sure the site of the child care is free from hazardous obstacles and has had a safety check beforehand (see pp. 4-5).

-If there are security guards on the site, make sure they know where the child care is and who the child care staff is. If possible, they should check in with the child care periodically. (This provision could be written into the contract for the use of the site.)

-Establish a good communications system between the child care and the place where the parents will be (public address system, telephone contact, "runners" available to hand carry messages, etc.).

-If the child care is far away from the event itself, make sure that someone from the sponsoring organization has the responsibility of checking in with the child care periodically to see if help is needed.

-Make contact with any neighborhood police patrol and alert them that the child care will be taking place. Ask them to stop by on their regular rounds (they can also be invited in to meet the children). Post the phone numbers of police and fire departments.

-Have the PHONE NUMBER AND LOCATION OF THE NEAREST EMERGENCY HOSPITAL POSTED and make sure all staff know where this information is located.

-Make sure there is an <u>insured</u> vehicle at the child care site and a licensed driver on the child care site at all times.

-Be sure the staff knows where the emergency and medical release forms for each child are kept. They should also be aware that they need to take a child's release form to the hospital with the child in case of an emergency. (Note: in case of a <u>life threatening</u> accident <u>only</u>, hospital personnel will treat a child without a form. In this one case (i.e. a seriously injured child) staff should not return to the site for a forgotten form until the child is under medical care.)

-Have enough staff and back-up personnel available to cover for emergencies and to provide for the absence of any staff members who have to take a child to a parent, a hospital or be away from care administering first aid.

-Make sure the first aid kit is readily available and adequately stocked for the number of children in care. Have at least one staff member on duty at all times who has a valid first aid certificate.

-When possible, solicit the on call services of a doctor or nurse. Audience participants may be willing to assume this role.

Special Age Groups And Special Kinds of Care

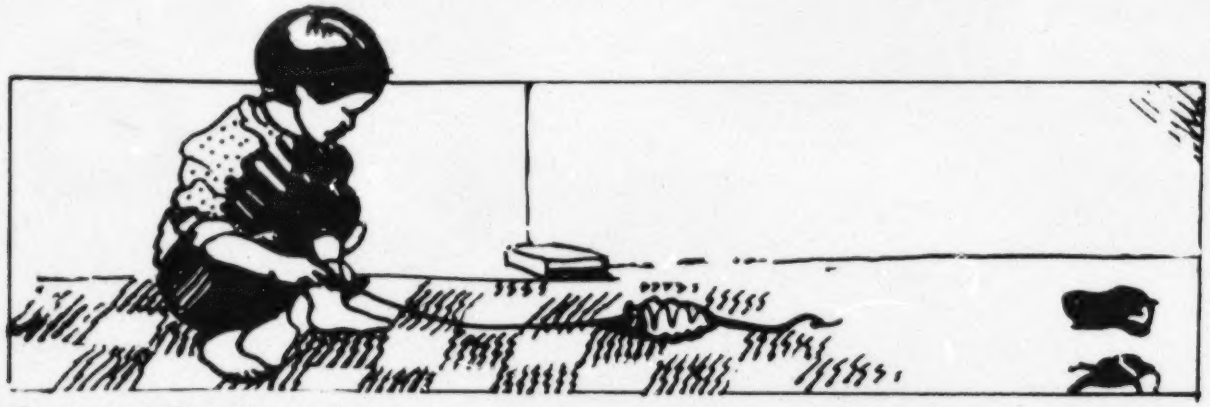
Slightly different approaches can be used when caring for either very young or much older children. Overnight or multiple day events also require special planning. This section reviews and makes suggestions for these special types of event child care.

Older Children

Experience has shown that limiting the age of older children to be served by the care is an important consideration. It is nearly impossible to incorporate children over the age of 10 or 11 in event child care because of their specific needs and because of the difficulties inherent in a widely mixed age group. Depending on the time of the event (day or evening), the length of the child care, and the space to be used, the staff and sponsor may want to either separate the older children from the others or to simply limit the child care to only children under a certain age. If there is a need for care for children older than this limit, alternative arrangements can be made. During the day, field trips to museums, ball games, ice skating rinks, etc. can take the place of having older children at the child care site. At night this age group can go to the movies or concerts -- always with supervising staff members of course. Special arrangements for older children are particularly important when an event draws families from out-of-town -- often parents attending these events have no choice but to bring older children with them. If older children are to be integrated into some aspects of the event (see pp. 8-9), the registration form for the event should have a section where parents can make reservations for their children to participate in these events. Tours of the "new town" can be fun for older children -- there may be places such as certain cultural neighborhoods, amusement parks or other attractions which may not be part of their every day life. Another reason for planning special activities for this age group is that it encourages them to stay with a supervised group. Resistance to "babysitting" or child care becomes rather acute as children get older. Providing interesting, age appropriate activities can resolve some of that resistance.

One consideration when planning these special activities is the amount of money they will cost. They may not be possible without passing on the entrance fees, etc. to the child's parents. To avoid misunderstandings, the total cost of school age child care should be clearly stated in the advertising for the event and included on the registration form. Taking children on field trips of any kind also means that a parental permission form must be signed and transportation to and fro must be arranged. Here are some suggestions for making field trips with older children successful.

- -Always get prior written parental permission (see sample forms, p. 40).
- -Make sure that private vehicles and drivers used in transporting children have liability insurance.
- -Discuss and decide on a few basic rules for the children and STICK TO THEM during the trip (e.g. "No leaving the group without permission." "No noisy talking on the bus", etc.)
- -Take the time to "count noses" at all stops along the way.
- -Make sure that two or more adults are along in case of an emergency and take along a first aid kit and emergency and medical release forms for all children.
- -Limit field trips to short periods of time and go to places that will be interesting for the particular age group. (Don't take 12 or 13-year olds to YOUR favorite museum unless it will also be fun for them!)



Infants and Toddlers

The decision to include younger children in event child care is one which deserves thought and a lot of preparation. Staff and sponsors should take into consideration parental needs, space accommodations, staffing, equipment availability and safety factors -- as well as their own philosophical ideas about infants in child care. Parents usually begin to need event care about the time their children will no longer stay happily and quietly in snugglies or other carriers. It is disruptive to have crying or unhappy babies at events, so the importance of having care for them cannot be over emphasized. However, infant care should never happen unless there is adequate staff (a ratio of at least one adult to every three infants), a safe environment, and a real commitment on the part of the sponsors and staff to make the child care a positive experience for the infants and their parents. There should be someone on staff who has experience with infants in group care -- and that person may have to conduct a "mini-course" on infant care for the rest of the staff. A working knowledge of first aid techniques and safety precautions is also imperative for the staff. Setting the age of admittance at three months, six months or even older is a decision which should be based on the needs of the parents and the feelings of the staff -- the adults working with the babies have to be comfortable with the decisions involving the care in order for it to be a success.

If parents are charged for child care, the parents of infants may have to be charged at a higher rate -- it is expensive to do quality care for little ones i.e. the staff expenses alone are much higher due to the higher child ratios. The same kind of careful preparation for regular event child care is needed for infant care with a few significant additions. These additional areas are not necessarily limited to those outlined on the following pages -- you may have other areas of concern depending on the particular situation.

PARENTS LEAVING BABIES IN CARE

Parents and staff need to work together closely to assure the happiness and comfort of all concerned in event child care -- this is especially true for infant care. The following are a few suggestions for getting the care off to a good start:

- -Parents leaving babies and toddlers should be REACHABLE AT ALL TIMES. Be sure that the registration and emergency forms are completely filled out.

- -Detailed WRITTEN information and instructions about non-verbal children are must items. Be sure that parents write out all important details staff should know about their babies (see sample infant information forms, pp. 34-36). Staff should not trust their memories; it's too easy to forget details.

-Parents who may be hesitant about leaving a crying or resisting baby should be encouraged to "try it out" and be reassured that they will be called if the baby doesn't adjust to the care.

-Each baby should be held and talked to as s/he enters the care. This attention will reassure both the parent and the child.

-Parents and staff should decide how long the trial period should last before the parent is called to pick up a crying child. It is true that some very young children have a difficult time separating from parents and may not be able to adjust to group care.

-Once the parents have left the child care they should not return until sent for or until the child care is over (the exception being nursing mothers, of course). This may sound "hard" on the parents but the reappearance of a parent can upset a child who has gotten comfortable in care and prompt a whole new separation anxiety syndrome!

SPACE, EQUIPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT

Ideally the space in which infants and toddlers receive care should be physically separate from the older children. This is both for safety and for the activity needs of both groups. The space needs to have closely guarded entrances; open doorways should be blocked or gated off. The space should also be far enough away from the event itself to prevent noise waking sleeping children and to prevent crying babies from interfering with the parents' peace of mind. Children shouldn't be able to get lost behind or pull over the furniture. Big pillows which can create small private SAFE places for children are a good idea. Cribs, playpens, walkers, strollers, and high chairs should be included as appropriate to the number and ages of the children. Mobiles and other stimulating visual aids are good to have around for children to look at (a bunch of ribbons hanging out-of-reach is a cheap mobile). Instead of or in addition to cubbies for each baby, there should be a specific space for each child's diaper bag. Parents should know where the diaper bags will be and they should all be labeled. If possible, a place to hang the diaper bags (out-of-reach) is desirable but a specific shelf for them is adequate. A potty chair (or two) which can be quickly and easily cleaned should be available for toddlers in the toilet training process. A rocking chair is also good to have when caring for little ones. (Be careful it is not used as a toy by toddlers or older children.)

STAFF RATIOS AND PATTERNS

While a ratio of one adult to three infants is probably adequate -- a ratio of one-to-two is not extravagant when working with babies (especially during transition times). The best way to handle staffing patterns with this age group is to assign each staff member two or three little ones at the beginning of the care and have those staff members maintain responsibility for "their" children during the entire care, even when the children are in a larger group activity or asleep. Very young children need this kind of continuity as much as possible. Keeping little ones separate from older children most of the time and assigning staff to no more than three children should insure close supervision and afford opportunities for lots of one-to-one contact.

HYGIENE AND HEALTH

Cleanliness is next in importance (maybe equal) to proper staffing. Because of the vulnerability of young children to contagious illness and because of the availability of potential disease spread through diapers, saliva, etc., it is important to take proper hygienic precautions in infant care. The changing table should be away from the cooking and eating areas. It should also always have a surface or pad which is washable -- and it should be wiped off with disinfectant after every changing. Adults should WASH HANDS WELL WITH SOAP BEFORE AND AFTER changing diapers. (Running water is a must for infant care.) If disposable diapers are used they should be placed in a covered plastic container which is kept out of the children's reach. If cloth diapers are used, they need to be rinsed out and put into a tightly tied plastic bag (individual bags labeled for each infant). The changing areas should also be close to a sink and far from the reach of toddlers. No baby should ever be left unattended even for a moment on the changing table. To keep babies comfortable, periodic "diaper checks" need to be made by the persons responsible for the infants. If each staff member has been assigned a few children, that person can see to his/her "own" babies. If all babies are shared by the infant staff, then a rotating diaper checking and changing schedule can be set up. Either way everyone working with the babies gets the joy and experiences of diapers!

The staff can post special diaper changing routines for each child by the changing table (e.g. "Micki likes to be sung to while being changed." "Tamika needs to play with her dolly," etc.). These instructions should also include the general reminders about where to put dirty diapers, what to do if a baby has a rash, and the fact that staff should wash their hands before and after changing each child's diaper. See our sample infant registration forms for some suggestions of what information is needed regarding babies' changing needs and routines.

Other hygienic needs involve keeping all toys and other objects clean. Everything washable (plastic, wood, cloth, etc.) should be washed before and after the event --and at the end of the day if the child care lasts for more than one day. Keep a good supply of rags, cloths, sponges, soap, disinfectant and a mop in the infant area -- but keep cleaning supplies out of the reach of the children. Baby bottles should be labeled for each child and NOT SHARED -- this is also true of any blankets a child may have brought. The health of infants and toddlers should be monitored throughout the day. Children who are ill or who look like they might have an infectious disease (e.g. fresh cold, temperature, etc.) should not be admitted to child care or should be excluded from care as soon as their condition becomes apparent. When children become ill during child care, the parent or designated adult needs to be notified immediately. Staff should never take chances with the health of infants and toddlers -- if in doubt, call the parent, and the nurse (or other medical personnel) if there is one on call.

SAFETY

The same safety precautions which apply to older children apply to infants with a few additional areas of concern. The floor of the infant area should be checked periodically for any small objects which could be swallowed (e.g. pins, marbles, money, buttons, etc.) Staff should also check to see that babies

and toddlers chew only on "appropriate" toys (obviously babies are going to want to taste everything!). Electrical outlets should be capped with safety caps and cords kept out of the reach of busy toddlers. Be sure all rugs (and blankets) on the floor are clean and non-skid. The non-skid aspect is especially important with beginning walkers. Any accordian gates being used should be monitored to prevent pinched fingers or their use as climbing structures! Babies should be checked periodically when napping (for adequate blankets, etc.). Sharp or protruding corners of essential furniture should be padded -- if furniture isn't essential, move it out of the infant area. All breakable or heavy objects should be kept well out of the reach -- the same goes for all cleaning supplies or other potential poisons. Staff should be careful when opening and closing any doors to the infant room. One key to infant safety is vigilance --little ones can get into mischief very fast if the staff isn't alert.

SCHEDULING AND ACTIVITIES

It is impossible with infants to set up a group schedule. Each baby will require individual times for sleeping, eating, playing and socializing. Efforts should be made to allow infants to interact with each other as even very young children enjoy this. But, the individual needs of each child must be first and foremost. Toddlers can be involved in some group activities, e.g. they can all eat snack at the same time and most children this age will need to nap in the afternoon. However the staff needs to be prepared for the toddler who also needs a morning nap (some will) and the one who is hungry before snack time. Attention spans are usually short in this age group so a variety of experiences need to be prepared. Careful attention should be paid to each child throughout the event so when a child is ready for a change of activity (e.g. from quiet play in a crib to crawling on the floor) the staff recognizes and can meet this need.

Some infants and toddlers may not be able to sleep surrounded by other children in event child care. Staff should try all the methods suggested by parents on the registration forms as well as old stand-bys -- walking the baby, patting her back, rocking in a rocking chair, lying down next to the baby on a floor pad. Don't be surprised however, if some little ones never "drop off." Be sure to inform parents if a baby didn't nap. For the security of those infants who do sleep, staff should be ready to go immediately to any baby as she awakes. It can be frightening to wake up in a strange place without a friendly face to greet you.

Activities for this age group should be fun but not so raucous as to lead to upsets or overly tired infants. Some activities which are usually successful for older infants and toddlers are:

-Tactile experiences like "feelie" boxes
-Play dough made out of edible material like peanut butter and honey
-"Sand" play with cornmeal or flour
-Playing with (not in) water -- with supervision and weather permitting
-Stacking and nesting and other manipulative toys
-Toys which make music or noise when handled
-Soft balls (large enough not to be swallowed)
-"Painting" using only water and brushes is a good outdoor activity on a hot day.
-Scribbling -- but watch out for magic marker or crayon marks on walls, furniture and children's bodies.
-Crawling and creeping opportunities -- supply a modified climbing structure made with soft pillows or mats.

-Music -- it can be used to aid movement activities.
-Books -- durable, chewable ones! However the staff should remember that a group story time is almost impossible with very young children.
-Bubbles are a big hit with toddlers.

INCORPORATING BABIES WITH OLDER CHILDREN

It is often enjoyable for infants and toddlers to be a part of the larger group of older children; but it may be too hard for the little ones to be around the stimulation, noise and big bodies for too long a period. Some of the older children may want to visit the infant/toddler room at certain times and "help out" with the babies. Keep the number of older children visiting at a manageable level and have good adult supervision at all times. Integrating toddlers and infants with older children the entire time should only be considered when the over-all group of children in care is quite small and staffing is adequate to accommodate the needs of this mixed age group. Even with a small group, separate sleeping space for infants is still needed.

Overnight Care

Preparing for overnight care demands some adjustments to regular planning. First of all, the children themselves should be prepared for the fact that they will be sleeping in a new place, that they will be sleeping surrounded by others and that their parents will not be around. Small children will suffer the most trepidation about this kind of care, but even older children will sometimes have reservations about this new experience. Parents making reservations for this kind of care should receive a written or verbal reminder to explain to their children that:

-They will be spending the night with other children and adults.
-The staff of people watching them like children and will take care of them.
-They will be picked up (in the morning, at noon before lunch, be as specific about the time as possible).
-They will be safe and should have fun at this special "slumber"party.

Parents also need to know in advance what type of bedding they should provide and what other things the children should bring (e.g. toothbrushes, pajamas, favorite toys, etc.). To save time at registration, ask parents to label all belongings at home before coming to the care.

The staff needs to reinforce the parental preparation and plan activities which will prevent restlessness, fears, and loneliness. Overnights should be fun, so the staff might want to set up a "party time" early in the evening which can include things like movies and dancing. Later there should be a "quieting down" time (which may take a long while) during which children can be read stories, given back rubs or listen to soft quiet music, etc.

The facilities selected for overnight care need to have adequate heating, ventilation and toileting accommodations as well as kitchen access. It will be easier to do the care if there is more than one room and if each child has enough pillows, blankets, etc. to create his/her own space. Staff should provide extra bedding in case parents don't bring enough or the environment is colder than expected (sleeping bags are good for this purpose). Teddy bears and other special sleeping companions should be carefully watched so they don't run away and get lost! Emergency exits should be clearly marked and the staff should discuss emergency procedures beforehand. Good communications (by phone, runners, etc.) are essential to the well-being of staff, children and parents. As with regular event child care, an insured vehicle and a licensed driver should be available in case of an emergency.

At bedtime, age groups will probably need to be strictly separated as younger children will need to go to sleep earlier than older ones. The exceptions would be if siblings want to sleep together or if some of the older children want to help "tuck in" and reassure the little children (they can be a big help). A complete description of each child's nighttime needs should be given by parents to the staff when the child is registered (e.g. when the child usually goes to bed, if s/he needs to be awakened during the night for a trip to the bathroom, what favorite toy is taken to bed, etc.). This information should be posted someplace near each child's cot or sleeping bag. (See pp. 37-38 for a sample overnight registration form.)

The staff should closely follow their planned schedule concerning the transition times from active play to quiet play to finally going to sleep. Staff ratios are very important -- especially as the children first start to go to bed. The basic five-to-one may not be sufficient as children may need individual back rubs and comforting. Those children who have trouble going to sleep should be told to respect those who are sleeping and remain quiet. Difficult "cases" may need to be segregated from the main group (remember, fears and crying can be contagious!) until they are calmer and ready for at least quiet rest if not actually going to sleep. During the night, when all the children (hopefully) are sleeping, it is a good idea for at least one staff member to stay awake (shifts can be scheduled). More than one adult (depending on the size and age of the group) should be sleeping with the children.

The morning hours should be treated much like the evening ones -- children who sleep late need to be respected by those who wake earlier. However, in most cases all children will probably surface with lots of energy without too many problems (and, all too early!). Waking up and finding oneself in a strange place may prove to be disconcerting for some children. Being reassured about when parents will be picking up children and being rapidly incorporated into the morning routine (making up beds, setting the table, eating breakfast, etc.) can help allay fears. Staff ratios are again important during this transition time as there will be much hustle and bustle in clean-up, washing and dressing the children and preparing the breakfast. Children should also be encouraged to help each other with the morning chores. "Big kid" helpers can again be invaluable in assisting little ones.

Parents should be reminded to be prompt in picking up their children from overnight care. And the last few children to be picked up will need reassurance that they haven't been forgotten. With good planning, adequate staffing and interesting activities, overnight care can be highly successful. Don't be surprised to hear even the most fearful children telling their parents how much fun they had at the "slumber party." The sponsoring organization may want its own staff to assist with clean-up so the child care staff can get a good morning's sleep (once all children are picked up of course!).

Long Term Event Child Care

While always crucial, good advance planning is the key to long term event care. The nature of such care means there will be more transition periods, and more activities to plan. CONSISTENCY OF STAFF is very important -- especially with the coordinator and primary care staff. There is also an even greater need for adequate back-up and relief staff. The coordinator should commit her/himself to the entire event time and carefully arrange breaks during slow periods to avoid being absent during transition times. Staff will also need breaks to prevent burn-out.

Most long term event child care takes place at camps, conferences, conventions or similar events. It can be scheduled so the children spend the entire day in the care or there can be morning and/or afternoon (and evening) sessions depending on the needs of the parents and the particulars of the event. If the same children attend all sessions it is a little easier to make sure the necessary information has been gathered from parents about each child. If there is turnover of the children in care, the staff will have to be more vigilant about the gathering of intake information. "New" children need to be incorporated into the care with as much ease as possible. Children who are attending all sessions of the care can be encouraged to welcome and assist the ones who are only there part of the time.

Parents must indicate where they will be during each day or session of the child care -- especially if the adult event has a number of activities (workshops, etc.) going on simultaneously. This will enable staff to reach parents quickly if necessary. A good communications system and good emergency procedures are also important. Because so much pre-planning is necessary to do a good job of long term event child care, requiring reservations for the use of the care is strongly recommended.

The children will get to know the staff better in long term event child care than in care for a shorter period -- consequently they may do more testing of limits. The staff should not be surprised if this occurs. It will help to have new activities prepared for the last third of the event to counter boredom and add some "spice."

Bringing the Care To a Close

The end of the care is as important as the beginning. The following sections look at ways to bring your event child care to a happy ending!

Evaluations

Evaluations from everyone involved in event child care are helpful. Parents, staff, sponsors, visitors and children should state their positive and negative feelings about the particular care and give their suggestions for change. All criticism should be honest and given in the spirit of support. Specific parent, staff, or sponsor complaints which can be remedied during the course of the event (e.g. not enough supervision, too much noise, etc.) should be taken seriously and whenever possible, an answer found to resolve the problem. On the other hand, if the care is going smoothly and most parents are satisfied, the coordinator should still be prepared to decide what changes can or can't be made to meet the needs of an individual parent -- even the best of care may not satisfy everyone.

There are many ways to elicit evaluations. Here are a few suggestions:

- -Parents can be asked to give verbal feedback to staff or sponsors.
- -Parents can be given an evaluation form which they hand in at the end of the care with specific questions on it for them to answer.
- -Parents can be urged to write a letter to the sponsor detailing their responses to the care.
- -Children (towards the end of the child care) can be asked what they liked or did not like about the care. They can also draw pictures or tell stories about what went on in child care.
- -Staff and the children can play "radio" or "tv" and one person can interview the others about how the child care went. Using a tape recorder during the "program" is fun and provides a taped record of the children's impressions.
- -Older children can write and act out a skit about the child care. If the staff is brave enough, the children can role play each of the staff members. The staff should observe what is emphasized and how -- whether positively or negatively.

In addition to feedback from the participants and users of the care, the sponsor and coordinator (with other staff members, if they wish) should plan a time for an analysis of the child care after it is all over. This can be in the form of a discussion or written letter. Both parties should be clear and honest with each other so they can help each other learn from whatever took place. For instance, if the staff feels the contract between themselves and the sponsor was not clear, they should state that and give suggestions for how to change it. If the sponsors feel that the clean-up was not adequately performed, the staff should be told. Any evaluation process should be a learning process -- not just a complaint session. One advantage to mistakes is that once they are recognized they don't have to be repeated. Careful evaluation of the care will help both the sponsor and the coordinator do a better job of providing event child care in the future.

Saying Goodbye To the Children

The end of the care is another transition time which needs to be well planned. The staff should again have specific assignments to carry out at this time. All art work, other special projects and personal belongings need to go home with the child who brought or created them. This can be facilitated by having a "sorting out" period scheduled shortly before the parents arrive. (Don't know when the event will end? -- Use a runner.) Have the children store items in their cubbies until the parents come. If all clothing and toys were labeled when the children were first registered, this process will go more smoothly.

Children should be released ONLY to parents or to adults that the parents named on the registration form. Exits need to be closely monitored to make sure that no children "slip away" without being properly checked out (sometimes possible in the bustle of departures). Each child should be given a warm good-bye from the staff and each parent should be told something about what the child did (i.e. "Mary really enjoyed writing stories." "Tom was a big help with the babies.") Parents and children both need a reminder to double check for all belongings before leaving. This kind of attention from the staff will help parents realize that their children have been well cared for and will hopefully allay fears about event child care. Children will depart with good feelings about themselves, child care, and future experiences with events if their parting is warm and supportive.

Late pick-up of children can sometimes be a problem. The foremost concern should always be for any children who remain after everyone else is gone. Reassurances that they will NOT BE LEFT ALONE and that their parents or someone they know WILL COME FOR THEM SOON are the important messages to communicate. One very good reason for having parent forms with emergency numbers on them is that the staff has some recourse when a parent is detained and cannot reach the child care on time. Staff should determine in advance at what point (after 15 minutes, a half hour?) emergency numbers should be called. In any case, at least one staff member should be available to stay with the child until s/he is picked up by a responsible, designated adult. The responsibility for staying with "late pick-ups" and the wage costs for doing it must be agreed upon in advance and written into the sponsor-staff contract. While it is less expensive for a member of the sponsoring organization to take on this role, it is better for the child's morale if the adult is someone s/he has come to know during the child care.

A note here about the staff's possible emotional response to parents who are tardy in picking up children. It is not only frustrating for the staff people involved (they may have their own children to care for or other commitments to keep) but their concern for the child left can prompt feelings of anger toward the parent. Some of this anger can be diffused by having specific staff assigned to stay late if necessary. Some event child care staff have used late "fines" for parents who do not follow the closing time regulations. (Parents need to be forewarned if this procedure is to be used.) When the child care is part of a long term event, parents can be warned that their child will be excluded from future sessions of the child care if the tardiness in pick-up persists. Staff and sponsors need to establish a clear policy about late pick-ups and this policy needs to be explained to all parents when they first enroll their children in care.

Final Clean Up

Although it is a very good idea to clean up throughout the child care and to have the children help with this process -- final clean up plans still need to be developed and agreed upon. Depending on the prior arrangements between the staff, sponsor and owners of the space, this final clean up becomes the responsibility of one or more parties. This agreement should be followed closely and clean up assignments should be as specific as possible to avoid potential problems. While parents can be encouraged to help with clean up when they come to pick up the children and volunteers can be solicited from other participants at the event --neither can be depended on to do the whole job. It should be part of the coordinator's role to see the care through to the end (who likes to clean up?) and even if s/he doesn't have to actually do all the work, the coordinator should be on hand to see that a good job is done. This should be paid time for the coordinator and any staff involved.

Any final details like returning keys, notifying the custodian, etc. should be adhered to. Remember, whether the space will be available for event child care in the future may well depend on all arrangements about its use being kept. Since the owner of the space will turn to the sponsor if there are problems, damage, etc., it is a good idea for someone from the sponsoring organization to check out the facility before it is locked up. It never hurts to take one last walk through to make sure all windows are closed and locked, all appliances are turned off, etc. Any items left behind by the children should "go home" with the sponsor and every effort made to return them. The responsible party should gather up and return any rented or borrowed equipment.

All the children gone? The child care facility cleaned and locked up? Now is the time for the staff and sponsor to congratulate themselves on a job well done. We hope this manual has been useful to you in planning and carrying out good event child care. Your suggestions and ideas are welcomed for future revisions. Best wishes for many successful benefits, workshops and conferences and help us spread the word -- that quality child care can be successful and (with a little work!) a great enhancement to many adult events.

Sample Forms Section

In this section you will find samples of the following forms:

-Event Child Care Information Form

-Event Child Care Registration Form

-Event Child Care Infant/Toddler Registration Form

-Event Child Care Overnight Registration From

-Emergency Information and Medical Release Form

-Field Trip Permission Slip Forms

-Contract between Sponsors of Child Care and Coordinator & Staff

You may want to make many changes in these forms. Please do so. It is important to have forms that will work for you and which accurately reflect the child care you are providing. The information sheet is for the parents to take with them and should have both the address of the child care and the phone number printed on it. We would suggest you staple into packets the forms you want the parents to fill in and return. That way you will save time and confusion at the registration area and will be sure that each parent has been given all the necessary forms to complete. (In a mixed age group, you might have one packet for infants/toddlers and another packet for older children.) To avoid congestion, provide plenty of writing space (and pencils or pens!) away from the actual registration table. Have enough staff on hand to see that each parent gets an information sheet, fills out all the forms and signs in the child. Any simple format will work as a sign-in sheet as long as it has spaces for:

-The child's name
-The signature of the parent or responsible adult
-The time the child was signed into care

If you also provide a space for the time and signature of the adult picking up the child, this same sheet can become your sign-out sheet.

The sample contract is included as a basis for building your own contract with your coordinator and staff. Some of its provisions may not work for you -- change them to meet your needs. In some cases we have built choices into our sample contract by phrases like "paid by check/in cash" -- meaning you would pick one method of payment. In other cases we have inserted the word (OR) between two choices. Even sections which don't offer alternative approaches are not meant to be set in concrete. We are only trying to include all the possible topics you might want to include in your contract. How you address these topics is up to you and your coordinator of care. One final note -- good child care coordinators and staff don't come cheap. You must budget for and expect to pay good wages for your child care workers (certainly more than minimum wage!) if you want a quality program. Please contact the staff at BANANAS if you have any questions about these sample forms.

Event Child Care Information Form (All ages)

Dear Parents,

Welcome to our event child care. We hope your child enjoys the program and you feel comfortable and secure about leaving your child with us. In order to insure a successful and safe child care situation, we ask you to read these instructions, to FILL OUT ALL THE ACCOMPANYING FORMS and to follow the suggested procedures about leaving your children. If you have any questions, please ask the staff. Our coordinator of the child care is _____. She will be happy to talk with you about any of your concerns. Address of Care:_____Phone:_____

1. Please complete the registration process before leaving. We will not accept children whose parents have not filled out all forms and signed children in on the sign in sheet.

2. Please use the adhesive tape and markers at the registration desk to label all clothing and other belongings. We will try our best to keep track of your child's clothes, toys, etc. However we cannot be responsible for lost belongings so please do not leave items of value (monetary or sentimental) such as jewelry or "special" clothes.

3. We will serve two snacks plus lunch during the day. You are welcome to join us for lunch but please let us know in advance if you will be with us so we can prepare enough food. Children with special dietary needs should have food provided by the parents -- please make these arrangements with the coordinator. Please make the staff aware of any children with food allergies.

4. There is a posted schedule of activities which are planned for the children. If your child is in the older group (10-12 years) please be sure to fill out the field trip permission form. This group will be gone from the child care site most of the day and we need your permission for your child to participate. If your child is under 10 years, there is another permission form which indicates that your child may be taken on walks around the neighborhood. Please sign this permission form.

5. We are sorry but we will only take children who have advance reservations for child care. If you do not have reservations, please see the coordinator to place your child on a waiting list. You will be contacted if and when openings occur. We are placing this limit on the care so we are sure of having the space and staff to do a good job.

6. We will try to make sure all children are happy and adjusted in child care. However, if your child becomes ill or is too upset to participate, we will ask you to take your child out of care. If your child is in the older group, and cannot conform to the safety and behavior rules for that group, the staff will contact you.

7. If for any reason, we must contact you, a staff member will first check for you at the workshop you indicated on your intake form. If we cannot find you, the conference coordinator will page you or a security person will try and locate you. Please indicate on the intake form, where you will be at all times. It is important in cases of emergencies to be able to find parents quickly.

8. Please read the medical release form carefully and sign it. If your child is injured we will make every effort to contact you but we must have a signed medical release form so hospital personnel can treat your child if you cannot be located.

9. Child care is open from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm each day. THERE WILL BE A LATE CHARGE OF $5.00 for every half hour after 5:00 pm.

10. If you have any questions, please contact the coordinator. Have a good conference.

Event Child Care Registration Form (Over 2½ years)

DATE:_____ (Please Print and Answer All Questions)

CHILD'S NAME: _____ PARENT/RESPONSIBLE ADULT: _____

HOME ADDRESS: _____ HOME PHONE: _____

CHILD'S ALLERGIES (IF ANY)

WHAT SHOULD WE KNOW ABOUT YOUR CHILD? Please list any special needs, fears, likes or dislikes your child has. We would like to know as much as possible about your child in order to help him/her to enjoy child care.

DOES YOUR CHILD NEED TO NAP? WHEN? ANY SPECIAL RITUAL BEFORE OR AFTER SLEEPING? (e.g. go to the bathroom, read a story, have a back rub, etc.):

PLEASE LIST ALL WORKSHOPS (THEIR TIMES AND LOCATIONS)WHICH YOU WILL BE ATTENDING WHILE YOUR CHILD IS IN CARE TODAY:

_____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

WHAT ADULTS OTHER THAN YOURSELF HAVE PERMISSION TO PICK UP YOUR CHILD? (We will not release children to any adults other than yourself or those listed below):

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

WHAT BELONGINGS DID YOUR CHILD BRING TO CHILD CARE? Please label them before leaving (Please describe below, e.g. "blue & white sweater", "Raggedy Ann doll"):

CHILD CARE CLOSES PROMPTLY AT 5:00 PM. THERE IS A LATE FEE OF $5.00 FOR EVERY HALF HOUR AFTER THAT TIME. Please contact the coordinator if you know you will be late.

WHAT TIME DO YOU PLAN TO PICK UP YOUR CHILD?: _____

WILL YOU BE JOINING US FOR LUNCH?: _____

I have answered all questions and will follow all the rules for this event child care.

_____
Parent's Signature

Please Return This Completed Form to a Staff Member

Event Child Care Infant/Toddler Registration Form

Dear Parents of Infants/Toddlers,

Please read the information sheet for parents and take it with you. We ask you to fill out this form in detail in order to make child care as pleasant and safe as possible for your young child. Please be assured that our child care staff is qualified and experienced. The staff ratio is one adult to every three infants, and your baby will be with the same staff member all day except for two 15-minute breaks and one half-hour lunch break. Another staff member will see to your child's needs during those times. If your child does not seem content in child care we will call you after a reasonable amount of time. It is extremely important that you also fill in the medical consent and field trip permission forms. The children will be going on short "walks" around the neighborhood.

PLEASE DO NOT RETURN TO CARE UNTIL IT IS TIME TO PICK UP YOUR CHILD UNLESS WE CONTACT YOU (Nursing mothers excepted, of course). We have found from experience that young children are easily upset if parents reappear before it is time to leave. Be sure to ask any questions you have of the staff before you say good bye.

CHILD'S NAME: _____ PARENT/RESPONSIBLE ADULT: _____

HOME ADDRESS: _____ HOME PHONE: _____

CHILD's ALLERGIES (IF ANY):

1. Is this the first time your child has been left in group care?:

2. If not, what kind of care is s/he used to? (a playgroup? child care center? family day care? full-time? part-time? etc.):

3. We will do our best to help your child get comfortable in the care. However, if s/he is crying or otherwise upset, how long do you think we should wait before contacting you?:

4. Did you bring your own food? (Label all bottles and food containers with <u>your child's whole name</u>). If so, do you want your child fed anything besides the food you brought? For example, can your child have whole milk if s/he runs out of the formula you brought with you?:

   If you want us to feed your child, what kinds of food does s/he like to eat?:

5. If you are a nursing mother, at approximately what times will you return to nurse?:

6. When does your child nap and for how long?:

   In what position does your child go to sleep best?:

   Please tell us what routine you use in putting your child to sleep and in waking him/her up:

   Does your child cry when going to sleep or waking up?:

7. How does your child respond to diapering? Is this typically a fun or a difficult time? What routine do you use and is there a toy you use to distract your baby while diapering? Did you bring the toy with you (if so, please label)?:

   Do you use any powders or ointments in diapering and did you bring them along (if so, please label)?

   Did you bring a diaper bag with you? If so, please label and describe below:

8. If your child is in the toilet training process, please tell us how you remind him/her to go to the bathroom. Do you have a set schedule that you use?

   Does your child need diapers at nap time?

   What words does your family use for urination and defecation?

9. Please tell us about any special fears or anxieties your child has and how you comfort him/her?:

10. What activities does your child enjoy?

11. How does your child let you know when s/he wants or needs something?

12. Is there anything else we should know about your child? Please <u>call</u> us if you think of something else we should know:

13. Please list all workshops (their times and locations) which you will be attending while your child is in care today:

    _____ _____ _____

    _____ _____ _____

14. What adults other than yourself have permission to pick up your child? (We will not release children to any adults other than yourself or those listed below)

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

15. What belongings did your child bring to child care? Please label them before leaving. (Please describe below, e.g. "blue & white sweater" "Raggedy Ann doll"):

16. CHILD CARE CLOSES AT 5:00 PM. THERE IS A LATE FEE OF $5.00 FOR EVERY HALF HOUR AFTER THAT TIME. Please contact the coordinator if you know you will be late.

WHAT TIME DO YOU PLAN TO PICK UP YOUR CHILD?:_____

I have answered all questions and will follow all the rules for this event child care.

_____
Parent's Signature

Please Return This Completed Form to a Staff Member

Overnight Event Child Care Information and Registration Form

Dear Parents,

This information will be used by the staff to make your child comfortable during the overnight child care and will help us know what your child needs in order to enjoy the care as well as get a good night's sleep. Please fill out this form completely and return it to the coordinator of the child care, _____. This information will be shared with the staff people who will be taking care of your child and will be posted by your child's cot for the second shift of child care workers.

Although we cannot guarantee that your child will go to sleep at his/her regular time, or that all of the special bedtime rituals will be carried through to the letter -- it is our intent to provide the most caring environment possible for our "over-nighters". Any help you can give us is appreciated.

DATE: _____ (Please Print and Answer All Questions)

CHILD'S NAME: _____ PARENT/RESPONSIBLE ADULT: _____

HOME ADDRESS:_____ HOME PHONE: _____

CHILD'S ALLERGIES (IF ANY)

1. WHAT SHOULD WE KNOW ABOUT YOUR CHILD? Please list any special needs, fears, likes or dislikes your child has. We would like to know as much as possible about your child in order for him/her to enjoy child care.

2. Has your child ever slept overnight in another child's home, or relative's house, etc. without you? Was it a happy experience?

3. Please give a brief description of how your child gets ready for bed (e.g. brushes teeth first, washes up, then uses the toilet, has a story last, etc.):

4. What stories, songs, games, etc. does your child like to hear before going to sleep?

5. Do you have a special hug or other physical or verbal kind of good night ritual? (e.g. saying "Don't let the bedbugs bite." "See you in the morning" etc.):

6. Does your child like back rubs? Will a back rub help your child go to sleep?

7. Did you send a toy or stuffed animal that your child likes to sleep with? Please describe this toy below. Make sure it is labeled with your child's name.

8. What time is your child left alone in bed and told it is time to go to sleep?

9. What (if any) nighttime fears does your child have and how do you usually handle them?

10. Once your child is asleep, does s/he wake up before morning? what do you do if s/he does wake up?

11. IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE WE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S NIGHTTIME OR MORNING ROUTINE? Please feel free to call us if you think of anything later you want us to know.

12. Please give us the following information, so we can locate you if necessary:

    Room or Cabin Number: _____ Phone: _____

    Your Location During the Early Evening: _____ Phone: _____

13. WHAT ADULTS OTHER THAN YOURSELF HAVE PERMISSION TO PICK UP YOUR CHILD IN THE MORNING? (We will not release children to any adults other than yourself or those listed below):

    Name: _____ Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

    Name: _____ Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

14. CHILD CARE ENDS PROMPTLY AT NOON. THERE IS A LATE FEE OF $5.00 FOR EVERY HALF HOUR AFTER THAT TIME. Your child will have breakfast and a morning snack before that time. Please contact the coordinator if you know in advance that you will be late.

    WHAT TIME DO YOU PLAN ON PICKING UP YOUR CHILD?: _____

    I have answered all the questions on this form and agree to follow the rules of the child care.

    _____
    Parent or Responsible Adult's Signature

    Please Return This Completed Form To A Staff Member

Emergency Information and Medical Release Forms (All ages)

EMERGENCY INFORMATION (Please Print)

CHILD'S NAME:_____ HOME PHONE:_____

ADDRESS:_____

PARENT OR OTHER ADULT RESPONSIBLE FOR CHILD DURING THIS EVENT:

NAME:_____ RELATIONSHIP:_____

NAME:_____ RELATIONSHIP:_____

PLEASE LIST TWO RELATIVES OR FRIENDS WHO CAN BE CALLED IF PARENT OR RESPONSIBLE ADULT CANNOT BE REACHED (Please list people who are not at this conference and who can be reached):

Name:_____Home Phone:_____Work Phone:_____

Address:_____Relationship to Child?:_____

Name:_____Home Phone:_____Work Phone:_____

Address:_____Relationship to Child?:_____

CHILD'S DOCTOR:_____PHONE:_____

CHILD'S MEDICAL NUMBER, IF ANY:_____

ANY KNOWN ALLERGIES TO MEDICATION?:_____

MEDICAL RELEASE (Please read, date and sign)

I give my child permission to participate in the event child care provided for this conference. I understand that participation is purely voluntary and that the sponsor and staff do not assume liability in case of injury.

I so hereby authorize *(Name of Coordinator and/or her delegate)* and her staff into whose care the minor listed below has been entrusted as agents for the undersigned to consent to any x-ray examinations, anesthetic, medical or surgical diagnosis or treatment and hospital care which is deemed advisable by, and is to be rendered under the general or special supervision of any physician and surgeon licensed under the provisions of the Medical Practice Act.

It is understood that this authorization is given in advance of any specific diagnosis treatment or hospital care being required but is given to provide authority and power on the part of my aforesaid agents to give specific consent to any and all such diagnosis, treatment or hospital care which the aforementioned physician in the exercise of his/her best judgment may deem advisable.

Date:_____ _____

Signature of Parent or Responsible Adult

Please Return This Completed Form to a Staff Member

Field Trip Permission Form (Local trip-all ages)

I give my permission for my child to go on walking trips around or near the child care site under the supervision of the child care staff. I have read, filled out and signed the emergency information and medical release form.

DATE:_____ _____ _____

Parent's Signature

CHILD'S NAME:_____

Field Trip Permission Form (Longer trip-older children)

I give my child permission to go on the field trips outlined on this form under the supervision of the child care staff:

Trip: *A's Game* Date: *May 23* Location: *Coliseum, Oakland*

Transportation: *Bart* Admission Fees (if any)?: *$2.50 plus $1 for Bart*

Trip: *Lawrence Hall of Science* Date: *May 24* Location: *Berkeley Hills*

Transportation: *Bus* Admission Fees (if any)?: *$2 plus $1 bus fare*

I understand and consent to my child using the forms of transportation mentioned above under the supervision of the aforesaid staff.

I have paid any admission fees necessary so that my child can go on these trips.

I have read, filled out and signed the emergency information and medical release form.

DATE:_____ _____

Parent's Signature

CHILD'S NAME:_____

Please Return This Completed Form to a Staff Member

Note: It can be most useful and efficient if any field trip permission forms are printed on the back of the emergency information and medical release form. That way the staff has all needed information on one page. (If these forms are printed on large index cards, they are easier to take on field trips.) In any case, the medical release form should be taken with the child on a field trip.

Contract Between Event Sponsor and the Coordinator of the Child Care

The following agreement between (*Name of the Sponsoring Organization*) and (*Name of the Child Care Coordinator*) constitutes the conditions under which child care will be provided for the (*Name of the Event e.g. Conference, Concert, etc.*) to be held on (*Date/s of the Event*) _____.

TIMES

The event child care will be offered: (*Day/s, Dates, Times, e.g. Monday, July 1, 9 am until 3 pm*) _____.
No children will be accepted into care before: _____ and all children will be picked up by: _____. *(The care should be open to receive children before an event begins and should last a reasonable amount of time after it ends. Exactly when you decide to open & close the care depends on the size and nature of the event.)*

AGES, GROUP SIZE AND HEALTH OF CHILDREN

1. The ages of the children in care will be limited to children between the ages of _____ months and _____ years.

2. The total number of infants/toddlers accepted into care will be: _____. The total number of children over 30 months accepted into care will be: _____.

3. All children must be in good health and will be examined by staff to determine if they have any contagious disease symptoms before being admitted into care.

4. Children with disabilities will be accepted in care based on prior discussions between the coordinator and the parents which insure that the environment and activities will meet the needs of the individual children.

PLACE OF CARE

The child care will take place at: _____.
(Give exact location; include room numbers if applicable for different groups of children, e.g. The infants will be cared for in Room 3-C. The older children will be cared for in Room 4-D at that location.)

(OR)

The location of the child care shall be determined by the coordinator with approval of the sponsoring organization.

RESERVATIONS

The child care will be offered by reservation with only the following exceptions:

1. If children who have reserved a space do not attend the child care, other children can take their place.

2. If children leave child care before their reserved time is over, other children can take their place.

3. A waiting list will be established of the children without reservations who need care. As openings occur, children will be called in order from that waiting list.

FIELD TRIPS

1. Children over _____ years may go on the following field trips with staff supervision: *(Include name of the event, its location and how the children will be transported)* .

2. Parents must pay all admission fees and transportation costs when registering.

3. All other children under _____ years are restricted to short walking trips near the child care site.

4. No child may leave the child care site for any field trip without a signed parental permission form.

PROVISIONS FOR LATE PICK-UPS

In the event that children are not picked up at the conclusion of the child care, the following steps will be taken:

1. The coordinator will try to contact the parent or responsible adult.

2. A staff member will be assigned to stay with the child/ren until a parent arrives.

3. If there are more than four children remaining at the close of care, additional staff will be asked to stay. The ratio of staff to children should be one-to-four.

4. If the parent or other adult designated on the forms does not arrive within 15 minutes after the close of child care, staff will call the emergency numbers.

5. All staff who must stay with children after closing time will be paid at straight time for the first 30 minutes and at time and a half for any time worked after 30 minutes.

6. Parents who are over 15-minutes late will be fined $5.00 for every half hour or portion of the half hour they are late.

SPONSOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. All wages as outlined in this contract shall be the sole responsibility of the sponsoring organization. They will be paid by check/in cash, etc. on *(date;time)* .

2. All costs for food shall be the sole responsibility of the sponsor. The total food budget for all children cannot exceed $_____. Purchasing the food is the responsibility of the coordinator who will be reimbursed upon presenting receipts. The following meals and snacks will be provided: _____ _____.

   (OR)

   All food will be provided by the sponsoring agency. The menu will be planned in consultation with the coordinator. Meals served will be: _____.

3. The sponsor will take responsibility for informing parents of infants that they must supply diapers and formula and of informing parents of children with special dietary needs that they must supply their children's food.

4. Costs of all consumable supplies will be paid by the sponsor. These costs are not to exceed $_____. The coordinator will be reimbursed for supplies upon presenting receipts.

5. Gas mileage for gathering and returning borrowed or rented equipment and any other child care related travel will be paid to the staff at the rate of 20¢ per mile. Staff will be required to submit a mileage reimbursement form for this expense.

6. Liability insurance coverage for the child care workers, children, volunteers and parents while they are in the child care facility or engaged in child care field trips will be assumed by the sponsor.

7. The sponsor will be responsible for taking all child care reservations. The reservations will be limited to agreed upon number and age range of children mentioned in this contract. The coordinator will be informed of the number and ages of the children no later than one week before the event.

8. Any rental or space usage agreements shall be between the sponsor and the owner of the space used for child care. The coordinator and staff shall be informed of the details of any such agreements but final responsibility for enforcing these agreements rests with the sponsor.

CHILD CARE COORDINATOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Develop and sign contract with sponsor.

2. Hire the staff in the following ratios:
   a. Infants/Toddlers: 1 adult to every 3 children
   b. Preschoolers: 1 adult to every 5 children
   c. Children over 5 years: 1 adult to every 6 children

3. The Coordinator shall also be responsible for maintaining the above ratios at all times by the use of paid or volunteer back-up workers. Back-up workers shall also be on call in the event that more staff is needed due to the absence of child care workers or to an emergency. The following procedures should apply to back-up workers:

   a. The coordinator will make all arrangements for such workers in advance.
   b. The back-up workers will be on call and will be given exact times they will be called if needed to replace absent regular staff -- no later than one hour after the child care begins.
   c. At least one/two paid relief workers will be at the event to provide for breaks and meals for regular staff (number of relief workers needed will depend on group size).
   d. If, in the case of an emergency, no back-up or relief workers are available the coordinator will solicit volunteers from the sponsoring organization or from the event participants.

4. Determine with advice from the sponsor the total number of children to be admitted into care, the total number of children in each age group.

5. Evaluate the site selected by the sponsors with the right to deem it unacceptable or unsafe for child care.

   (OR)

   Select an appropriate child care site subject to approval by the sponsor.

6. Coordinate all schedules and staff assignments.

7. Coordinate preparation and planning meeting with staff.

8. Arrange for borrowed, rented and purchased materials as needed. All rented equipment must have prior approval of sponsor. Arrange for return of borrowed or rented items.

9. Prepare all written material for parents -- registration, medical release, field trip permission forms, emergency information, explanation of care for parents and sign-in/sign-out forms.

10. Make contact with security personnel and local police patrol for the conference.

11. Be present throughout the event except for the breaks as outlined in the Coordinator's working conditions.

12. Supervise all clean-up.

13. Be available or designate another staff member to be available to take an injured child to the hospital. Insure that a licensed driver and an insured vehicle are available throughout the event.

14. Supervise the entire program and be present when the parents arrive to both drop off and pick up their children.

CHILD CARE COORDINATOR'S SALARY AND WORKING CONDITIONS

1. The Coordinator will be paid $_____ per hour for the following:

   a. 15 hours preparation and organizing time prior to the event.
   b. All hours that the child care is in session.
   c. 5 hours of work incurred in returning borrowed/rented equipment, gathering and discussing evaluations with sponsor.
   d. All hours spent supervising children who were not picked up on time.

2. The Coordinator shall be paid time and a half for all late time past the first 30 minutes.

3. The Coordinator shall receive two 20-minute breaks each day of the care and one half hour lunch break each day. These breaks may not be scheduled during any transition time, e.g. the opening of child care, during the children's meals, etc.

4. The Coordinator will be paid by check/in cash on *(Be specific -- at the close of the care or by mail 1 wk. after the event, etc.)*

5. The Coordinator will not be included in the staff to child ratios but will act as a supervisor throughout the child care and will be available to talk to parents, work in emergencies, contact security and generally maintain the over-all quality of care.

CHILD CARE STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

1. All staff will meet in advance of the event for one hour of planning and scheduling for the care. The Coordinator will organize and chair this meeting.

2. All morning staff will work from _____ am to _____ pm.

   All afternoon staff will work from _____ am to _____ pm.

   (OR)

   All staff will work from _____ am to _____ pm.

3. Staff will supervise children, follow the planned activities and schedule, and work under the direction of the coordinator.

4. Any staff member who is unable to work their assigned shift will notify the coordinator in advance and be responsible for finding a staff replacement.

(OR)

Any staff member unable to work the assigned shift will notify the coordinator at least 12-hours in advance so the coordinator can find a replacement worker.

5. Staff is responsible for taking no more than the allotted time for breaks and meals and for being on time for work shifts.

CHILD CARE STAFF SALARY AND WORKING CONDITIONS:

1. All regular staff will be paid $_____ per hour for the following:

   a. 2 hours preparation and organizing time prior to the event.
   b. Not less than 2 hours per day and not more than 6 hours per day spent in the direct care of children (one-half hour of this time is to be spent in set up or clean up time depending on the assigned shift).

2. Designated staff will be paid at straight time for the first half hour of supervision of late children and at time and a half for any hours past the first 30 minutes.

3. Paid breaks will be scheduled by the coordinator and consist of the following:

   a. No paid breaks if shift is less than four hours
   b. One 15-minute break if shift is more than four but less than five hours
   c. One 15-minute break and one 30-minute meal break if shift is more than five hours

4. All staff will be paid by check/in cash on:_____. Because all staff are contracted workers and not regular employees there will be no payroll taxes or withholding taken from the salary.

5. All staff are under the direction of the coordinator of the child care and will not leave the child care site without his/her knowledge or permission.

6. In the event that all staff hired are not needed for the child care the following will apply:

   Staff not needed will be paid for one/two hours of work but must stay for the first half hour of the shift.

   (OR)

   Staff not needed will receive free admittance to the event but be on call if more children arrive needing care after the event has started.

7. In the event that all staff hired are not needed for the child care the final decision of which staff shall work the event shall be

   The responsibility of the coordinator

   (OR)

   Decided by the staff as a whole.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

All parents using the child care will be required to do the following:

1. Fill in all registration, emergency information and medical release forms before children are admitted into the child care.

2. Comply with the opening and closing hours of the child care.

3. Take responsibility for making their locations known to the staff during the time the children are in care and letting the staff know if there are any changes in their original schedules as listed on the registration form.

4. Label all clothing and other belongings left in child care.

The Coordinator has the right to refuse care to any child whose parents do not adhere to the child care rules and procedures. All such rules will be included in the information sheet which is to be available to parents when registering their children.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Whenever there is a medical or other emergency requiring the parents' attention, the following will take place:

1. The Coordinator will send a staff person to find the parent/s at the location indicated by the parent/s on the registration form.

2. The staff person will also alert the sponsor to the emergency situation and ask them to page the parent/s.

3. If the emergency warrants immediate action, the child will be taken to the nearest emergency hospital either by a staff member or via ambulance. The child's medical release form will be taken with the child to the hospital. Staff will remain with the child until the parent/s arrive at the hospital. Any decision to postpone or begin treatment will be made by the supervising medical personnel.

4. If the parent/s cannot be located, the staff will contact one or more of the adults indicated on the emergency information form.

5. At no time will a child be left alone or will the other children be left unsupervised by staff in order to deal with an emergency situation.

CLEAN UP RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff will be responsible for:

1. Packing and returning all borrowed or rented equipment in good condition.

2. Sweeping all rooms used by the child care.

3. Wiping all washable surfaces such as tables, counters, etc. with disinfectant.

4. Replacing any disarranged furniture and restoring the rooms used for care to the condition in which they were found.

5. Picking up any debris which was left outside the building by staff or children in care.

6. Emptying all wastebaskets.

7. Insuring that bathrooms and kitchen areas are clean and in the condition in which they were found.

Coordinator will be responsible for scheduling adequate paid staff to insure proper clean-up and remaining until clean up is completed to lock the facility.

Sponsor will provide 3/4 members of its organization to assist with clean-up and will be responsible for any heavy cleaning, e.g. mopping and waxing of floors if needed.

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, AGREE TO THE ABOVE STATED CONDITIONS FOR THE CHILD CARE TO BE OFFERED BY THE SPONSOR ON: *(Date of the event)*.

DATE SIGNED:_____

_____ _____

Sponsoring Organization Coordinator of the Child Care

Bananas is a non-profit organization which began its service in 1973 as an all volunteer organization. We provide child care information and support to parents and providers in the cities of Alameda, Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville, Piedmont and Oakland. We currently receive our funding from the State Department of Education, private foundations and individual contributors (donations gladly accepted and tax-deductible).

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In addition to the Event Child Care Manual, *Bananas* also publishes a bi-monthly Newsletter, a variety of Handouts on child rearing and child caring and *Bananas'* Guide which is a comprehensive handbook for families. Send for the *Bananas'* Publications List for information on how to order any of these.

This Manual can be obtained by sending a check for $5.00 to *Bananas*, Inc., 6501 Telegraph Avenue, Oakland, CA 94609. This price includes postage and handling.

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